

Between a 'student abroad' and 'being from Latvia': inequalities of access, prestige, and foreign-earned cultural capital

Article (Accepted Version)

Lulle, Aija and Buzinska, Laura (2017) Between a 'student abroad' and 'being from Latvia': inequalities of access, prestige, and foreign-earned cultural capital. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 43 (8). pp. 1362-1378. ISSN 1369-183X

This version is available from Sussex Research Online: <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/67336/>

This document is made available in accordance with publisher policies and may differ from the published version or from the version of record. If you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the URL above for details on accessing the published version.

Copyright and reuse:

Sussex Research Online is a digital repository of the research output of the University.

Copyright and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable, the material made available in SRO has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

**Between a ‘student abroad’ and ‘being from Latvia’: inequalities of access,
prestige, and foreign-earned cultural capital**

Aija Lulle (University of Sussex, UK and University of Latvia, Latvia)

a.lulle@sussex.ac.uk

Laura Buzinska (University of Latvia, Latvia) laura.buzinska@lu.lv

Abstract

This paper visualises tertiary-level students who study abroad as simultaneously both international students and members of an emerging diaspora. Coming from a country (Latvia) which is peripheral and relatively poor by European standards, students go abroad for multiple reasons not necessarily directly connected with study (eg. family reasons, labour migration); yet their evolving diasporic status is instrumentalised by the Latvian government which wants them to return and contribute to the country’s development. Based on 27 in-depth interviews with Latvian students and graduates who have studied abroad, our analysis focuses on three interlinked dimensions of inequality: access to education at home and abroad; the varying prestige of higher education qualifications from different countries and universities; and the inequalities involved in getting recognition of the symbolic and cultural capital that derives from a non-Latvian university. Within a setting of neoliberal globalisation and conflicting messages from the homeland, students and graduates are faced with a challenging dilemma: how to balance their materialistic desire for a decent job and career with their patriotic duty to return to Latvia.

Keywords: Students, Mobility, Diaspora, Neoliberalism, Inequality, Latvia

Introduction

Literature on international student mobility (ISM) increasingly evokes thinking about the inequalities that are characteristic of this type of migration. First, and among the most salient, are economic inequalities in terms of lack of resources to access education abroad and cover study fees and living expenses (Holloway and Jöns 2012; Raghuram 2013; Wakeling and Jefferies 2013). A second strand of literature emphasises inequalities in the prestige of education, commonly reflected in university rankings and notions of a ‘world-class’ or a ‘good university’ (see e.g. Brooks and Waters 2011: 35; Findlay et al. 2012; Tindal et al. 2015). And third, there is evidence of inequalities caused by lack of recognition and the differential valuation of international credentials (see Brooks and Waters 2011; Waters 2009; 2012). All these dimensions of inequality, in reality, are interlinked. For instance, problems in the recognition of diplomas can hinder both access to education abroad and also access to jobs and recognition of the cultural capital of qualifications upon return to a country of origin.

In our case-study about foreign-educated Latvians, we want to further nuance the debate on these forms of inequality – access to education, prestige, and recognition of cultural capital – through positioning students simultaneously as migrants and as individuals who produce cultural capital that evolves in particular ways during migration (Erel 2010). Students abroad are also the potential targets of a small and peripheral nation-state’s strategies to promote development through return migration.

Latvia is a rather typical case among other Central and Eastern European countries which have experienced large-scale emigration over the past two decades. As Brooks and Waters (2011: 31) have highlighted in the context of international student mobility, ‘neoliberalism has encouraged many people to see themselves as “choosers”’. Both student mobility and return migration are strongly imbricated by a neoliberal

emphasis on successful individuals who want to develop their careers and to return back to their countries of origin. However, this choice may not be so straightforward in practice. Young people may find themselves caught in the dilemma of self-development abroad on the one hand, and peripherality but ‘patriotic’ feelings (Billig 1995: 55-59) towards their country of origin, on the other. Yet, it is little understood how individuals navigate themselves through such a process of ‘choosing’ in the context of the above-described dilemma. Therefore our main question in this paper is this: How do Latvian students abroad perceive their position in terms of access to education, inequalities in the prestige of higher education institutions as well as inequalities in recognition of their cultural capital, in this dual frame of reference of choosing to study and live abroad or return ‘home’?

In the following sections we will, first, provide a context within which foreign-educated young people become positioned as new diaspora members – a trend increasingly found in countries like Latvia where the external population is nowadays called a ‘diaspora’ instead of ‘emigrants’ to avoid the negative connotations of the latter term. Students and highly educated youth, due to their evolving cultural capital, are especially valued among the other members of external population (King et al. 2016: 185-186). Following van Hear (1998), we will use here the term ‘diaspora’ in the sense of ‘new diasporas’ and Brubaker’s (2005: 12) notion of diaspora as a ‘community of practice’. Second, we will problematise the inequalities of IMS with emphasis on migration-specific cultural capital. Then comes a section on methods. The main body of the paper consists of an analysis of three main sections on access to education, prestige, and problems related to the recognition of foreign-earned education upon return to Latvia. In the conclusion we discuss our findings and suggest future avenues of research.

Positioning students as young diaspora members

Emigration from Latvia, which started after the country gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, accelerated after the country joined the EU in 2004. More than 300,000 Latvian citizens were residing outside their country in 2016, while Latvia's domestic population had fallen to below 2 million, due to a combination of this emigration and a very low birth-rate (CSB 2016). The large-scale emigration of young people from Eastern European countries is mainly the result of the open border policy that has emerged due to the combination of the disintegration of the block of socialist countries and the enlargement of the EU. It needs to be noted that international student migration increases at a faster pace than other forms of migration (see Bilecen 2014; Brooks and Waters 2011).

Several emigration states have responded to this trend by paying increasing attention to their external population through new diaspora initiatives, especially towards the young and educated. In Latvia, this is reflected in diaspora policy documents (e.g. MFA 2013). The government's Return Migration Support Plan, for example, prioritises the return of highly skilled people (MoE 2012). In 2015, this return policy initiative was specifically targeting diaspora youth who obtained higher education abroad, offering work placements at state institutions (State Chancellery 2015). Through such policies, Latvian students abroad become strategically positioned as diaspora members and this positioning has certain implications, such as a sense of obligation towards the country of origin. We will therefore need to track these down in relation to our informants' individual plans for their personal development.

'Young diaspora' initiatives from other countries include the development of summer schools for Polish youth (FEPS 2014), the Lithuanian global youth leaders programme for young Lithuanian graduates from foreign universities (LT 2015; Kurk

Lietuvai 2014), or Romania's initiative to become an attractive 'brain region' with the help of diaspora youth (SMART Diaspora 2013). These rexamples show how emigrant states tap into the human capital of the young and talented, forging both diasporic ties and a desire to return. Such strategies establish a specific discourse of return: return is successful for those who are resourceful, confident individuals. In a study of the return migration of highly skilled Lithuanians, Barcevičius (2015: 9) found that most high qualified returnees tend to be 'pro-active, self-confident, and ambitious in their job-search effort as compared to the Lithuanian population at large'. They are also more prone to self-employment and entrepreneurship. Such findings are highly illustrative of neoliberal ideas of study abroad and return that emphasise market-oriented individuals, who are themselves responsible for the successful validation of their cultural capital upon return. Barcevičius (2015) also rightly points out that such a profile of highly skilled returnees can be self-selective and, therefore, in a sense, biased, since the voices of those who did not return remain unheard. In our study we overcome this risk of bias by surveying both returnees and those still abroad.

Ho et al. (2015) and Lerner (2015: 204) highlight that uncritically celebrated diaspora strategies can perpetuate inequalities, especially due to the selectivity inherent in emigration and study abroad and the neoliberal emphasis that shifts the responsibility for social transformation onto individuals. Thus, our research focuses on the heterogeneous nature of diaspora youth in order to broaden our understanding of the inequalities within contemporary European nation-states (Smith and Gergan 2015). We also need to know whether Latvian students abroad feel somehow 'responsible' to return to Latvia and whether they display a sense of 'patriotic duty' to the Latvian state or society at large.

Furthermore, study abroad may not have always been their initial aim of emigration because international mobility for studies, work or family reasons become

126 mixed. For instance, in her research on Romanian and Bulgarian students in the UK and
127 Spain, Marcu (2015) found that student mobility could be used as an element to diversify
128 personal development strategies: as a means of achieving permanent migration, as a tool
129 for competition, as well as for a successful return home in the future. Being enrolled in
130 higher education institutions abroad does not necessarily mean that the initial purpose of
131 migration was study abroad. This was also confirmed by a recent study which surveyed
132 1,000 Latvian students abroad, revealing that only about one third of those who were
133 studying at the bachelors level left Latvia with the initial intention of studying abroad
134 (Kasa 2015). Instead, employment was their main motivation for emigrating, and the
135 inability to find a good job in Latvia prevents students from returning.

137 **Inequalities of student migration and migration-specific cultural capital**

138 Umut Erel (2010: 643) argues that ‘migrants exercise agency by creating new forms of
139 *migration-specific cultural capital*’ (her emphasis). In Bourdieu’s (1984; 1993) theories,
140 the formation of specific forms of capital within broader realms of economic, social,
141 cultural and symbolic forms cannot be separated from an understanding of society as
142 constituted by overlapping *fields* and lived through certain *habitus*. Fields, or, a more
143 encompassing notion, social spaces, are constituted by specific power relations and
144 struggles to achieve access to certain forms of capital (Bourdieu 1989). Fields are
145 characterised by specific goals, shared beliefs, norms and logic (Bourdieu 1993: 72-76).
146 Latvian students abroad are simultaneously positioned in two fields: as ‘students’ and as
147 ‘being from Latvia’. Thus, the international education space and the diasporic position of
148 a student are interwoven with symbolic power relations that may have potentially
149 conflicting norms and logics in the validation of cultural capital. This leads them to
150 exercise their agency in both fields and to a ‘conscious or intuitive prioritising of certain

dispositions and practices' by taking into account structural conditions (Kelly and Lusi 2006: 833).

Habitus sets a context within which various forms of capital are specifically valued and given meaning. For example, cultural capital in the form of a degree from a certain country or university has a relative value in different places (Waters 2009). Similarly, 'patriotic' meanings within a nation-state or a diaspora community have different meanings elsewhere, and ethnically selective diaspora ideologies may fail to stir such sentiments (Kosmarskaya 2011; Morawska 2011). Moreover, habitus, understood as the 'totality of environment and social influences' (Waters and Brooks 2010: 221) as well as 'practical knowledge of one's place within a field' (Borlagdan 2015: 841), has both personal and collective qualities, 'which shape the value that individuals place on practices, and, therefore, on various forms of capital' (Kelly and Lusi 2006: 834-835). Through habitus we can identify the tensions between the positionalities of being 'a student' and 'being from Latvia'.

Most importantly, migration-specific capital involves transformative elements (Erel 2010). First, in terms of access to education and, upon the return to the country of origin, access to work, we have to focus on the transformative norms and value given to a specific form of cultural capital – a degree from abroad. As Burbules and Torres (2000: 92) have argued, focusing on internationalised higher education is particularly useful for tracing the creation and transformation of diasporic spaces. Compared to labour migration or refugee movements, international student migration is a privileged form of mobility because higher education institutions compete for those with the best potential to develop cultural capital (Chaloff and Lemaître 2009), even paying for the mobility of some students by offering scholarships. However, students' personal accounts of access

to education and work from a dual optic of student migration and diasporic position may reveal inequalities that challenge this notion of privileged migration.

Second, through this dual position of our informants, we can trace symbolic power in the form of the prestige perceived through a specific logic such as university rankings or certain cities and countries that facilitate the accumulation of cultural capital. These, too, carry inherited inequalities. As Brooks and Waters (2011: 35) have highlighted, increased mobility in the EU is likely to benefit affluent countries and prestigious universities. The geographical unevenness of higher education mirrors pre-existing power relations and the academically hegemonic role of the English language. Taking the case of England and Scotland, Tindal et al. (2015) demonstrate that students are attracted to ‘good’ universities, or, in other words, those educational institutions which hold a globally recognised reputation for high-quality education. Educational choices can also be driven by lifestyle factors, and can be used as a stepping-stone for developing a cosmopolitan identity (Tindal et al. 2015: 98). Finally, understanding these inequalities and the relative value of prestige can be re-evaluated in the light of return migration.

Third, when it comes to recognition of cultural capital, nation-states can formally protect their labour markets by not giving official recognition to foreign credentials (Bauder 2003), and this can also apply to return migrants. But more importantly, informal barriers to recognition can also play a decisive role: other criteria, such as specific local experience for accessing jobs or social capital, including the vital role of personal recommendations, can be introduced despite formal recognition (Erel 2010: 648, cf. Hage 1998).

All these three forms of inequality put into question both idealised students’ expectations that prestigious foreign diplomas would carry a symbolic capital also back

home, as well as neoliberal constructions of return migration as desirable projects for resourceful individuals. Studying abroad is an important youth transition, which may include the processes of family formation and intimate relationships, as well as the initiation or intersection of working life (Ryan and Mulholland 2014). Moreover, as several studies have demonstrated, educated and student youth also engage in low-paid, precarious jobs where labour and student migration overlap or shift in a non-sequential manner (e.g. Hadgrove et al. 2015).

Methods

The present paper forms part of a larger ongoing project on Latvian students and the ‘new’ student and graduate diaspora, carried out in 2015. The study adopted a mixed-method design: an internet-based questionnaire (n=307) with the practical aim of obtaining pilot data on the spatial trajectories and linkages of students and graduates with institutions in Latvia and return migration motivations; and an accompanying in-depth interview survey designed to gather qualitative insights about the mobilities of Latvian students and graduates abroad. The results presented in this paper originate from the qualitative part of the project, consisting of 27 interviews (Table 1) with Latvian students who have experience of higher education in one of three regionally different destinations: the UK, the US, or the Nordic countries. The United Kingdom is the main destination for Latvian emigration and study, while the Nordic countries are on a more recent and fast-developing trajectory for student migration as there are (usually) no fees required for students to gain a study place at university there. The US is the most attractive destination for Latvian students wishing to study outside the EU (Altbach 2004; Tung 2008).

Interviewees were primarily recruited as a sub-sample from the internet survey, in which they could indicate their agreement to participate in an interview. Additional

interviewees were reached by snowballing according to the following criteria. First, respondents should still be studying or should have completed their full-time higher education programmes outside Latvia no later than 2009. Second, we were interested in surveying not only those who left Latvia with the explicit purpose of studying but also those who left for other reasons, such as emigration with their families as children or adolescents, labour migration, or love migration. Such diversification was crucial in order to represent the actually existing diversity of educated Latvian diaspora youth abroad. Third, we included students at the Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD levels in order to trace the various transitions students make during their studies and geographical trajectories. Slightly more women were interviewed. We explain this by reference to three factors. First, researchers' positionality: we are women. Second, there is clear evidence that women are more inclined to participate in scientific research, and hence more willing to give interviews than men (Galea and Tracy 2007: 647). Third, women constitute a roughly two-thirds majority of the Latvian third-level student population, and are equally a majority in the study-abroad population. The median age of the student and graduate respondents was 26 years. The interviews lasted for one hour and were conducted in the language preferred by the respondent (Latvian, English or Russian). Interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent. Names quoted in this paper are pseudonyms.¹

The semi-structured interview method (Bernard 2006; Corbetta 2003) was used both to cover certain chosen topics and to allow free conversation. We paid special attention to how our respondents assigned meaning to and perceived the interconnections between cultural capital and their individual geographical trajectories. We also paid special attention to the students' experience of becoming a diaspora member. At the centre of our interest were unequal opportunities and the students' negotiations for accumulating cultural capital in various places.

Inequalities of access to education

In 1995, 55% of study places in Latvian higher education institutions (HEIs) were state-funded, while 45% of students funded their studies privately. However, in 2002 and 2003, just before the country joined the EU, only 21% of HEI places were funded by the state budget. The proportion of self-funded students remained high until the onset of the economic crisis in 2008. However, in 2009 the proportion of state-funded study places rose to 37% and it reached 42% of all study places in the 2015/2016 academic year (MoES 2016: 7). The numbers of student admissions plummeted significantly at the beginning of the economic crisis – from 32,792 in 2008/2009 to 24,371 in the following academic year. With slight fluctuations, the numbers of annual student admissions continued to decrease and only 22,073 students were admitted to Latvian HEIs in 2015/2016.

Against the backdrop that state-funded scholarships do not cover basic needs, and that loans to cover study and living costs are difficult to access and incur to interest payments of up to 5% per year (Regulations 220 2001), studying elsewhere in Europe becomes a viable option, especially because the EU provides privileges for its citizens as they can both work and study in all EU countries under the same circumstances as they would at home.

At the time of the interview, Elina (age 19) was a Bachelor's student in Denmark. She originally comes from a small town in Latvia. 'I chose Denmark because there is no university in my town, so I had to move anyway', she justified. Another respondent, Katrina (25), tried but did not secure a state-funded study placement in Latvia after completing her Bachelor studies in Riga. 'It was a logical decision to go to Denmark, because I did not have to pay for studies there'. Denmark, compared to other Nordic countries, has been the most visible in the regional higher education market and broadly advertises many study

274 opportunities in English, targeted at potential students from Latvia and elsewhere within the
275 Nordic and Baltic regions.

276 Sanita (27) is an example of a recent labour migrant who ended up studying abroad.
277 During the interview, Sanita stressed that she did not study in Latvia because she did not want
278 to use up her mother's last savings. After finishing secondary school and a short working
279 experience in Latvia, Sanita went to the United Kingdom to look for better-paid work. She
280 worked in a hotel for three years until she met her future husband, a Dutch national. The
281 newly-formed family wanted to settle in the place they imagined to be the best environment
282 for raising children, and moved to Denmark. Because of her family responsibilities and
283 limited proficiency in Danish, Sanita did not immediately enter the labour market, but instead
284 started a degree in hospitality studies in Denmark, available for free and in English.

285 These three cases demonstrate how relatively open borders diversify the possibilities
286 for Latvians to study abroad. For Elina, there was not much difference between moving to the
287 capital city of Riga and moving abroad. For Karina the issue was study fees in Riga while for
288 Sanita, enrolment in higher education took place after she had already gained experience in
289 the labour market and formed a family.

290 What we can infer from these experiences is precisely the warning by Burbules and
291 Torres (2000: 248) that, due to the increasing commercialisation of European universities,
292 public education institutions lose their democratic function to tackle social inequalities. In our
293 case, these are inequalities that push people to hit the road and access education abroad. In the
294 examples cited above, these are economic and regional inequalities, as the expense of
295 studying in Riga was perceived as not worthwhile and Elina chose to study for free and obtain
296 a loan for the costs of living abroad. Individual strategies to tackle these inequalities can
297 involve years of working before a solution is found on how to access education.

298 However, students also reveal recognition-related inequalities that hinder access to
299 education in Latvia. Roberts (21) obtained his Bachelor degree in the UK, and wanted to do
300 his Master's in Riga. He got rejected from both universities he applied to in Latvia. The first
301 one explained that they cannot accept his three-year Bachelor degree and require four years of
302 undergraduate education, while the other university rejected him on the formality of not
303 having his diploma in a printed version during the application process. Here is the relevant
304 section of the interview with Roberts:

305 I had filled in my application, I go to the admissions office. And they are like: 'Do
306 you have your diploma ready?' I said: 'No, I am getting it at the end of the
307 month.' And they said: 'Well, come back to us when you get it'. But the
308 application process would have closed then. And that kind of upset me because I
309 was like, well I have a first-class degree, I would be paying for my studies, so
310 why don't you just accept my application now? And I can prove that I have it,
311 because I have the transcript, it is just not an official paper yet. [...] So I decided to
312 look through Master's degrees that they offered in the UK and had the scholarship
313 too. [...] I was considering Oxford, Cambridge, Kings College, University College
314 London and Edinburgh. Because all of these are respected universities. I was like
315 – OK, Roberts, you have a good degree so why don't you just go for something
316 high? (Roberts, 21, Bachelor, UK)

317

318 All these examples illustrate how the free movement rights in the EU provides
319 wider opportunities for studying abroad, sometimes for free. But Roberts' example also
320 captures the conflict between his diasporic position – he wanted to return to Latvia – and
321 how a formalistic rejection by Latvian universities provoked him to put a stronger

emphasis on personal development and the value of a ‘prestigious’ degree, which is the focus of our next section.

Inequality of ‘prestige’

University rankings create the strongest perceptions of what a prestigious education is and where it could be obtained. According to Shapiro (2009: 262), ‘prestige is the capitalist form of status and collective charisma’. Ranking lists are regularly circulated to attract more cultural capital but the top universities and countries rarely change (Brooks and Waters 2011). These lists, that reproduce inequalities in cultural capital and potential of growth, are nevertheless consulted carefully when choosing education abroad. The University of Latvia, the main university in the country, appeared in the *Quacquarelli Symonds* (QS n.d.) rankings for the first time only in 2013, placed among the top 701-800 universities. Although being confident that in Latvia she could get easily compete for a state-funded place in Latvia, Inguna (23) consciously prepared for her studies in the UK, but only if she could get into a relatively ‘good’ university:

I chose my university by the ranking, I took off the list those top universities which I would really not be able to get in and those about which I thought – there is no reason to go abroad, it is better to pay nothing and stay in Latvia. So if I don't get into this particular range of universities it is cheaper and more reasonable to stay and study in Latvia. I felt like a child in a candy store when I was contemplating the university programmes. It was all so thrilling and interesting (Inguna, 23, Master, UK).

346 She got a place in one of the relatively highly ranked universities in Southern England
347 and also did her graduate studies there. Rankings became a concern for those informants
348 who had either already studied abroad or who received this information from their friends
349 who studied abroad.

350 For example, Gatis, a 26-years-old PhD student, moved to the US when he was
351 six because his father obtained a research job at a university there. Being raised in a
352 diasporic habitus where return to Latvia is among the fundamental values, he said he
353 ‘considered the possibility of studying in Latvia’ after finishing high school in the US.
354 But then he decided in favour of a US degree because ‘all that relocation to the US by my
355 dad was to secure better education for his children’. Furthermore, he continued:

356

357 It would be *so great* [emphasised] to study in Latvia, but the level of scientific
358 excellence is just too low; there are only three international publications amongst
359 the top 10 scientists in my field in Latvia (Gatis, 26, PhD, US).

360

361 He clearly prioritised the accumulation of a specific form of research-oriented cultural
362 capital over return to Latvia, and yet Gatis still put an idealised emphasis on life in Latvia
363 as a value.

364 Similarly, Roberts, whom we introduced in the previous section and who obtained
365 almost all of his education outside of Latvia and did his Bachelor degree in the UK, also
366 talked about his dilemma of return versus a ‘good’ diploma:

367

368 I was thinking, where I should get my bachelor’s degree, in the UK or in Latvia?
369 Because my aim was to return back home [to Latvia]. The British education

370 system is very international and of high quality, so I just decided to stay here
371 (Roberts, 21, UK).

372

373 Although he initially planned to return to Latvia and he still calls Latvia his home, after
374 the formalistic rejection by Latvian universities, he revisited his values again and
375 prioritised a ‘prestigious’ university in London, that also provides a full scholarship, over
376 remaining in Latvia.

377 Solving the dilemma of the trade-off between a prestigious diploma and the
378 perceived moral obligations towards Latvia constitutes an existential and economic
379 decision which extends beyond the simple dichotomies of emigration and return. Students
380 studying abroad regularly visit Latvia, they often choose study topics related to Latvia,
381 especially those in the social sciences or arts, and they often choose to conduct fieldwork
382 in Latvia or apply for work placements back in Latvia, even if such a relatively little-
383 known country is not seen as a fashionable topic of inquiry.

384 Furthermore, several respondents were looking for research partners at Latvian
385 universities. The migration-specific capital here was validated through the ideals of the
386 transnational academic space, which emphasises connectedness and consortium-building.
387 This can be used in combination with internships or separately, as in the following case
388 described by Janis (26), another PhD student in the US:

389

390 I had a great deal of freedom where I could undertake an internship, and so an
391 opportunity to go to Latvia for two summers came up. I made contacts with
392 specialists in my study field and these were further developed with one of my
393 professors in the US. We invited a professor from Daugavpils [a regional town in
394 Latvia] to give guest lectures in the US (Janis, 26, PhD, US).

395

396 It should be noted that Janis did not relate this practice to return; on the contrary, his
397 embeddedness in the US provided a mechanism for his migration-specific cultural capital
398 to be validated for him. Also, by being located in the US, he could help other Latvians
399 from Latvia to obtain a transnational experience in a university in the US as he was in a
400 position to invite a visiting professor to the US and he chose to invite a Latvian person. A
401 strategy to help somebody else from Latvia served as a way of mediating between the
402 dilemma of being a research student at a prestigious university and being a ‘responsible’
403 migrant from Latvia.

404

405 **Inequalities of recognition**

406 Rethinking the return is intrinsically related to the idea of not returning and to
407 disillusionment: the participants expressed the feeling that their cultural capital is not
408 valued in Latvia and they voiced harsh criticism towards what they perceived as an
409 exclusionary selectivity of ‘valued’ returnees. Those who studied abroad usually have
410 fewer social networks back in Latvia, which prevents them from converting their cultural
411 capital into good jobs. Furthermore, the cultural capital acquired during other life
412 experiences abroad, such as everyday exposure to diversity and tolerance (Holloway and
413 Jöns 2012: 483), featured prominently in their discussions around the topic of return.
414 Respondents were, rather, prioritising the idea of their future mobilities elsewhere,
415 utilising their education and networks in the search for good opportunities globally
416 wherever they might present themselves.

417 According to the interviewees, the biggest obstacles to return are the lack of
418 workplaces for the highly skilled, especially those who have a PhD degree. Although
419 some nurtured an idealistic perception that a degree from a foreign university could

420 constitute additional cultural and human value in Latvia, others, who had a direct
421 experience of return or based their judgements on friends' experiences, expressed their
422 concerns that a foreign degree and specialisation might instead actually make it more
423 difficult to get a job in Latvia due to cronyism at local institutions and the lack of open
424 competition. Some did obtain a job in a profession without prior social contacts, although
425 examples like 21-year-old Arta were the exception rather than the rule.

426

427 When I decided that it was time to get a job I was pretty lucky. The company I
428 work for took me pretty quickly. If you have the right attitude and the right skills
429 and you are applying for an opening for which you qualify, then it's easy. People
430 say it's hard to find a job. They might be looking in the wrong place or having
431 different expectations (Arta, 21, Bachelor, UK).

432

433 Arta embodies an 'ideal returnee' and, despite having a degree from a famous Scottish
434 university, she did not emphasise the possible distinctiveness of her foreign-earned
435 cultural capital. She positioned herself rather as an ordinary young Latvian with the 'right
436 attitude and the right skills' (in her case – specifically technical skills) and no additional
437 need to capitalise on her foreign degree. She prioritised a patriotic return to Latvia and
438 rationalised the other gains she can now enjoy in Riga – a vibrant city, lively cultural life
439 and cheaper living compared to UK cities.

440 Here we can draw on the insightful work of Waters (2009; 2012), who
441 demonstrated the important role of place-based social capital in the recognition and
442 evaluation of international academic credentials. For some informants, the informal non-
443 recognition of the cultural capital they thought would be valuable (a degree from a 'good'
444 university) was a major challenge. Some were also aware that social circles in Latvia are

rather closed and characterised by a lack of meritocracy. This creates unequal opportunities for the conversion of degrees into jobs, since those outside of a particular social circle have less possibility to compete and to resist appointment practices where open competition are undermined. The result, again, is a tendency to prioritise an international career over the homeland return. In the meantime, young graduates sought to create their own workplaces and seek temporary work engagements in Latvia as part of the normal state of a graduate's life that corresponds with Barcevičius' (2015) findings about pro-active returnees. For example, Laura (25), a Master's student in the US, stated the following:

I came back and I was actively working in an NGO and various projects related to fundraising for those young Latvians who want to study abroad. My partner is Latvian, but from the Latvian diaspora in Germany. We are currently in the process of moving to Germany. (...) We [Latvia, as a country] should stop being afraid of letting people go. I returned because [in Latvia] were many great initiatives and I wanted to be a part of all this. The fact that I am leaving now *does not mean that I would not come back* [emphasised] (Laura, 25, Master, US).

As can be seen in this quote, Laura came back to Latvia, gained work experience, and, due to family reasons, she was planning to move away again. She also actively challenged the narrow meaning of the return as a unidirectional action only.

Since return is often closely related to the transition from education to work, the critique extends especially to recruitment practices, which are often based on informal social networks. Several informants reported that they applied for or inquired after many jobs in Latvia, but did not even receive a formal response or were unable to attend

interviews due to the inflexibility of employers in Latvia. The case of Guntra, a 29-year-old Master student in Denmark, illustrates this situation:

A job in Latvia was my priority. I did apply for several positions and was shortlisted three times. But the ministries [potential employers] did not accept a Skype interview, they asked me to come in person and usually it was announced just few days before the interview. As a student, I simply could not afford to buy flight tickets at such a short notice (Guntra, 29, Master, Demark).

Several respondents emphasised the necessity of knowing someone in Latvia who could help them get a job. Although Latvians abroad still have knowledge about Latvian systems and speak Latvian fluently, the conversion of the cultural capital they gained abroad into jobs at home did not prove easy, as they were often considered as ‘others’ in their home country due to the very fact that a person has been away from home institutions and localised social capital. Some students wanted to prolong their stay abroad in order to earn more money to help them get a better professional start in Latvia. This future scenario not only places students abroad closer to the typical responses of Latvian labour migrants in their future imaginations (Lulle 2014), but also reiterates the weight of economic inequalities that foreign-accumulated cultural capital alone cannot eliminate. Hence, only those who are ‘resource-ful’ or, in other words, have access to economic, social and cultural resources (Allen et al. 2013: 433-434) can afford to experiment with their return.

Another worry that emerged from the interviews was the extra barrier of ‘acceptability’ placed against those Latvians of Russian origin, who are somewhat marginalised in post-independence Latvia. Our interviewees thus critically engaged with ‘ethnicity’ as a category of exclusion.

495

496 I'm not a Latvian by origin. We always hear that we [Latvian state] want only
497 Latvians to return to Latvia, but not the Russians. It's not that we don't want them, we
498 just don't mention them. I feel more free here. I am a voluntary migrant here, but in
499 Latvia people tend to see me a migrant although I am a second-generation-born
500 Latvian citizen (Irina, 25, Bachelor, UK).

501

502 Studies away from home usually took place in multicultural settings. This was in
503 contrast with Latvia's highly sensitised narratives on ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers,
504 despite the fact that Russian youth do feel that they belong to Latvia to a high degree (Birka
505 2015). This ultimately problematises the question of students' ability to claim their foreign-
506 earned degree in Latvia as valuable if they themselves are not ethnic Latvians. Ethnic
507 essentialism, therefore, was seen as a critical barrier in Latvia. In the long run this is true also
508 for foreign-educated 'ethnic Latvians', because foreign experience and, possibly, having a
509 foreign-born partner hampers a person's ability to fit smoothly into various spheres of life, as
510 Gunita, PhD student in the US, explained:

511

512 If a Latvian who has studied abroad is married to a foreigner and both want to develop
513 their professional careers, Latvia should be an attractive destination for both of them
514 (Gunita, 30, US, PhD).

515

516 In sum, the return of those who have earned a foreign degree reveals inequalities in a
517 different light. The lack of transparent structures in the labour market, and the bureaucratic
518 obstacles to recognition of foreign degrees as legitimate and valuable, prevent returns to
519 Latvia from taking place. Besides, the conflict between what is perceived and idealised as the

symbolic ‘global’ value of a good degree is highly relative back home if a person lack social networks. Sin (2013), who researched the value of UK international education obtained in Malaysia, argues that the possible negative value of foreign cultural capital still remains under-researched. Local capital, when entering into the national labour market, often holds more importance and thus can offer better economic opportunities locally (Sin 2013: 860). Return therefore can indeed perpetuate inequalities, as those who are ‘resource-ful’ – having economic resources and contacts (Allen et al. 2013) – can activate their cultural capital back home and access jobs or launch their own activities. Thus, the resourcefulness and pro-activeness that are expected from returnees are capital-enabled. Or, as Gale and Parker (2015: 93) put it: ‘the constraints of structure are not simply addressed by adding accounts of agency’.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have aspired to contribute to two strands of literature, namely those on ISM and on evolving ‘new’ or ‘young’ diasporas, using Latvia as a case study. We achieved this through positioning the research participants simultaneously as international students/graduates and also as subjects of return migration initiatives that are closely linked with ideas about diasporas and development in Eastern Europe.

From the point of view of international student mobility, we chose to deconstruct the category of a ‘student abroad’. Due to large-scale emigration, young adults from Latvia living abroad are heterogeneous: some left Latvia as children, for others the decision to emigrate was related to their study plans, while others emigrated for different reasons, such as labour migration or a romantic attachment. Similarly, there are many reasons of the return. In this study their common denominator was their study-abroad situation.

Our analysis of this dual positionality as students and young members of an emerging diaspora has been set within a broader theoretical context of neoliberal globalisation, which constructs students who study abroad as ‘neoliberal subjects’ (Brooks and Waters 2011: 3; Rizvi and Lindgard 2010: 32). However, partly reflecting the tensions and contradictions within globalisation, foreign-educated students and graduates have been shown to face multiple inequalities. The key dilemma is between studying and staying abroad to maximise economic and career benefits, and return home as a patriotic duty; but there is a further contradiction between an official rhetoric of encouraging a ‘productive return’ of highly-educated Latvians, and the realities of the problems they face when they do try to return and develop themselves and their country. The inequalities that we have analysed in the main body of the article have been threefold.

First, economic inequality was visible in the context of access to higher education. Differences in course fees (including the possibility of studying for free) and access to loans clearly influence options of where to study. Study abroad, at least for some, is not a privileged choice (Chaloff and Lemaître 2009) but rather a viable alternative if securing a state-funded place in Latvia fails. Inequalities of access to education are also bureaucratic: inflexibility in admission procedures obstructs smooth access to Latvian universities by those who have not received a Latvian-issued diploma. Therefore, cultural capital is turned into a form of ‘national’ capital (Erel 2010: 648). Further research is needed on the inequalities which occur as a result of the incompatibility of international-level achievements from globally recognised universities and the practical requirements apparently demanded by national-level universities. Research is especially needed on the way this non-conformity hinders the return migration of the skilled and also intra-inequalities within the diaspora.

Second, inequalities were discussed in terms of the prestige and quality of education. The symbolic capital of a degree from a prestigious university is a salient element of the

globalised habitus of transnational academic space, publicised regularly in university rankings. For those informants who prioritised professional development over return to Latvia, the reputation of the university they had studied at was relevant. The career-oriented tended to favour an international education over an institution in Latvia. However, some informants also recognised that the symbolic capital of a prestigious foreign degree can have a relative value back in Latvia that reflects some of the power dynamics that are commonly experienced in core-periphery situations. Further research would be needed to understand how inequalities among the returnees with more prestigious international qualifications may unfold.

Third, in terms of the recognition of a foreign-earned degree, we agree with Waters (2009; 2010) and Sin (2013) on the importance of localised interpretations and hence on the relative and even negative value of foreign-earned cultural capital. Studying abroad also shapes new inequalities, as students who wish to return experience significant problems with the transition to the labour market, particularly as they do not possess the ‘right contacts’; in other words, local-based social capital. Although policy both academic and discourses emphasise mobility and cross-border knowledge exchange as beneficial, we need to pay a particular attention to inequalities in practice when social ties are weakened and local ways of ‘how things are done’ prevent foreign educated youth from returning to their country of birth (Bilecen and Van Mol, 2017 in this issue). More empirical examples on how the cultivation of other forms of capital during studies abroad could improve the status of cultural capital upon return could yield important positive results and overcome closed practices in the labour market.

The norm of return migration of Latvian youth strongly featured in informants’ dual position of being ‘students’ and ‘being from Latvia’. They were aware that becoming highly skilled made them potentially valuable for the emigration-depleted country. However,

informants also recognised that their return was often constrained due to the small scale of the labour market for specialised jobs and the nature of recruitment practices in their home country. Moreover, they especially raised their voices against ethnic inequalities, which privilege the ethno-nationalistic membership of ‘valued’ returnees, namely ethnic Latvians. An uncritical emphasis on the idealised proactive international student and simultaneously resourceful and valued returnee can perpetuate inequalities within and across nations, as Ho et al. (2015) and Larner (2015) have warned. Moreover, inequalities can increase within the diaspora too. If we observe both processes – student migration and ‘new’ diaspora formation – simultaneously, we also need to ask a question about the morality of encouraging return migration with lack of structural support. Moreover, returnees who do succeed, through self-promotion and whatever other means (‘luck’, ‘connections’ etc.), contribute to a collective habitus which juxtaposes ‘neoliberal enterprise’ against a population which continues to be impoverished by the effects of economic crisis and emigration.

Finally, the findings presented here are based on a qualitative sample and hence cannot be generalised. Future quantitative and comparative approaches in countries with large-scale emigration and return migration, or diaspora initiatives for students and graduates, would yield important insights into student and return migrant dilemmas.

Acknowledgements

Centre for Diaspora and Migration Research and the State Research Programme EKOSOC.LV 5.2.4., University of Latvia supported this research. We thank Russell King, Başak Bilecen and Christof Van Mol for constructive feedback to previous drafts of the paper.

References

- Allen, K., Quinn, J., Hollingworth, S. and Rose, A. (2013) Becoming employable students and 'ideal' creative workers: exclusion and inequality in higher education work placements, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34(3): 431-452.
- Altbach, P. G. (2004) Higher education crosses borders: can the United States remain the top destination for foreign students? *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 36(2): 18-25.
- Barcevičius, E. (2015) How successful are highly qualified return migrants in the Lithuanian labour market? *International Migration*, Doi: 10.1111/imig.12224 1-11.
- Bauder, H. (2003) "Brain abuse" or the devaluation of immigrant labour in Canada, *Antipode*, 35(4): 699-717.
- Billig, M. (1995) *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.
- Bilecen, B and Van Mol, C. (2017) Introduction: International Academic Mobility and Inequalities (in this issue).
- Bilecen, B. (2014) *International Student Mobility and Transnational Friendships*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Birka, I. (2015) Expressed attachment to Russia and social integration: the case of young Russian speakers in Latvia, 2004–2010, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01629778.2015.1094743.
- Borlagdan, J. (2015) Inequality and 21-year-olds' negotiation of uncertain transitions to employment: a Bourdieusian approach, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18(7): 839-854.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (Nice, R. trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1989) Social space and symbolic power, *Sociological Theory*, 7(1): 14-25.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) *Sociology in Question*. (Nice, R. trans.). London: Sage.
- Brooks, R. and Waters, J. (2011) *Student Mobilities, Migration and the Internationalization of Higher Education*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brubaker, R. (2005) "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(1): 1-19.
- Burbules, N. and Torres, C. eds. (2000) *Globalization and Education: Critical Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- CSB (2015) Population and key demographic indicators, IE01, Central Statistical bureau, Latvia. Retrieved from <http://www.csb.gov.lv/en/statistikas-temas/population-key-indicators-30624.html>

- Erel, U. (2010) Migrating cultural capital: Bourdieu and migration studies, *Sociology*, 44(4): 642-660.
- FEPS. (2014) Foundation for European Studies. Summer school for youth leaders from Polish diaspora. Retrieved from <http://feps.pl/projects/2013/summer-school-youth-leaders-polish-diaspora>
- Findlay, A. M., King, R., Smith, F. M., Geddes, A., and Skeldon, R. (2012) World class? An investigation of globalisation, difference and international student mobility, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 37 (1): 118-131.
- Gale, T. and Parker, S. (2015) Calculating student aspiration: Bourdieu, spatiality and the politics of recognition, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 45(1): 81-96.
- Galea, S. and Tracy, M. (2007) Participation rates in epidemiologic studies, *Annals of Epidemiology*, 17(9): 643-653.
- Gudelis, D. and Klimaviciute, L. (2016) Assessing “global Lithuania”: the strengths and weaknesses of Lithuanian diaspora engagement strategy, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01629778.2015.1127833.
- Hage, G. (1998) *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press.
- Hardgrove, A., Rootham, E. and McDowell, L. (2015) Possible selves in a precarious labour market: youth, imagined futures, and transitions to work in the UK, *Geoforum*, 60: 163-171.
- Ho, E.L.E., Hickey, M. and Yeoh, B.S.A. (2015) Editorial: special issue introduction: new research directions and critical perspectives on diaspora strategies, *Geoforum*, 59: 153-158.
- Holloway, S.L. and Jöns, H. (2012) Geographies of education and learning, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 37(4): 482-488.
- Kasa, R. (2015) Ārzemju augstskolās studējošie vēlas vairāk profesionālu iespēju Latvijā, *Providus*, 31 August 2015. Retrieved from <http://providus.lv/article/arzemju-augstskolas-studejosie-velas-vairak-profesionalu-iespeju-latvija>
- Kelly, P. and Lusi, T. (2006) Migration and the transnational habitus: evidence from Canada and the Philippines, *Environment and Planning A*, 38: 831-847.
- King, R. Lulle, A. and Buzinska, L. (2016) Beyond Remittances: Knowledge Transfer among Highly Educated Latvian Youth Abroad, *Sociology of Development*, 2(2): 183-203.
- Kosmarskaya, N. (2011) Russia and post-Soviet “Russian diaspora”: contrasting visions, conflicting projects, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 17(1): 54-74.

- Kurk Lietuvai (2014) A work placement programme for Lithuanian graduates from foreign universities Retrieved from www.kurklt.lt/en
- Larner, W. (2015) Globalising knowledge networks: universities, diaspora strategies, and academic intermediaries, *Geoforum*, 59: 197-205.
- Lulle, A. (2014). Spaces of encounter-displacement: contemporary labour migrants' return visits to Latvia, *Geografiska Annaler, B series* 96 (2): 127-140.
- LT (2015) Programme *Global Lithuanian leaders*. Retrieved from www.lithuanianleaders.org
- Marcu, S. (2015) Uneven mobility experiences: life-strategy expectations among Eastern European undergraduate students in the UK and Spain, *Geoforum*, 58: 68-75.
- MFA (2013) *On Cooperation of the Foreign Ministry with the Diaspora in 2013-2015*, Informational report, Ministry of Foreign affairs, Republic of Latvia.
- MFA Ireland (2014) Jimmy Deenihan, TD. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Retrieved <https://www.dfa.ie/about-us/who-we-are/our-ministers/minister-of-state-jimmy-deenihan>
- MoE (2012) *Return Migration Support Plan*, Ministry of Economics, Republic of Latvia.
- MoES (2016) *Report on Higher Education in Latvia, 2015*. Ministry of Education and Science. (*Pārskats par Latvijas augstāko izglītību 2015. gadā*) Retrieved from http://www.izm.gov.lv/images/izglitiba_augst/Parskats_2015.pdf
- Morawska, E. (2011) Diasporas' representations of their homelands: exploring the polymorphs, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(6): 1029-1048.
- Q S (n.d.) *World University Rankings*. Retrieved from <http://www.topuniversities.com>
- Raghuram, P. (2013) Theorising the spaces of student migration. *Population Space and Place* 19(2): 138–154.
- Rizvi, F. and Lindgard, B. (2010) *Globalizing education policy*. London: Routledge.
- Regulations 220 (2001) Cabinet of Ministers, Republic of Latvia, Regulations No 220 On Order how student living expenses loans are granted, re-paid , and Rīgā 2001.gada 29.maijā Kārtība, kādā tiek piešķirts, atmaksāts un dzēsts studiju kredīts un studējošā kredīts no kredītiestādes līdzekļiem ar valsts vārdā sniegtu galvojumu
- Ryan, L. and Mulholland, J. (2014) Trading places: French highly skilled migrants negotiating mobility and emplacement in London, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40(4): 584-600.
- Scott, S. (2006) The social morphology of skilled migration: the case of the British middle class in Paris, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(7): 1105-1129.

- Shapiro, S. (2009) Intellectual labor power, cultural capital, and the value of prestige, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 108(2): 249-264.
- Smith S. H. and Gergan M. (2015) The diaspora within: Himalayan youth, education-driven migration, and future aspirations in India, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 33(1): 119-135.
- SMART Diaspora (2013) Initiative to attract Romanian students and high skilled diaspora members abroad, The League of Romanian Students Abroad. Available: <http://www.lsr.ro/smart-diaspora/>, <http://londra.mae.ro/en/node/1246> (accessed 05.07.2015).
- State Chancellery (2015) Work placement programme for diaspora youth, State Chancellery, Republic of Latvia, 2015.
- Tindal, S., Packwood, H., Findlay, A., Leahy, S. and McCollum, D. (2015) In what sense 'distinctive'? The search for distinction amongst crossborder student migrants in the UK, *Geoforum*, 64: 90-99.
- Tung, R. L. (2008) Brain circulation, diaspora, and international competitiveness, *European Management Journal*, 26(5): 298-304.
- Van Hear, N. (1998) *New Diasporas: The Mass Exodus, Dispersal and Re-Grouping of Migrant Communities*. London: UCL Press.
- Wakeling, P., Jefferies, K. (2013) The effects of tuition fees on student mobility: the UK and Ireland as a natural experiment, *British Education Research Journal*, 39: 491-513.
- Waters, J.L. (2006) Geographies of cultural capital: education, international migration and family strategies between Hong Kong and Canada, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 31(2): 179-192.
- Waters, J.L. (2009) Transnational geographies of academic distinction: the role of social capital in the recognition and evaluation of 'overseas' credentials, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 7(2): 113-129.
- Waters, J.L. (2012) Geographies of international education: mobilities and the reproduction of social (dis) advantage, *Geography Compass*, 6(3): 123-136.

Table 1. Interviewees

F / M	Pseudonym	Age group	Main reason to emigrate	Years abroad	Country where studied last time	Education level	Subjective accounts on intentions to return
F	Katrina	24-28	Study	5	Nordic DK	Master	No, only if finding place in public administration
F	Elina	19-23	Study	4	Nordic DK	Bachelor	No, only if possible to establish private business
F	Sanita	24-28	Work	5	Nordic DK	Bachelor	To continue studies in Denmark
F	Guntra	29-33	Study	5	Nordic, DK	Master	Tried, but could not get a job.
M	Ingars	19-23	Study	4	Nordic, FI	Bachelor	No
F	Ilva	24-28	Love migration	6	Nordic, FI	Bachelor	No, because a foreign partner would not get an adequate job
M	Ansis	29-33	Study	4	Nordic, SE	PhD	Yes, if could find a research partner and secure a funding
F	Arta	19-23	Family	18	UK	Bachelor	Returned and found a job in profession
F	Inguna	19-23	Work	6	UK	Master	No, regular annual visits to Latvia
M	Roberts	19-23	Family	11	UK	Bachelor	Wants to return, find professional work and continue education in Latvia
M	Rolands	24-28	Work and study	5	UK,	Master	Returned, but wants to leave again because work is poorly paid in Latvia
F	Una	19-23	Family	6	UK	Bachelor	Wants to return after studies
F	Linda	19-23	Study	4	UK	Bachelor	Wants to return after studies
M	Armins	24-28	Study	6	UK	PhD	Would want to return, but due to lack of opportunities would search for job abroad.
F	Irina	24-28	Study, but first was working	8	UK	Bachelor	No
F	Inga	24-28	Study	7	UK	Bachelor	Would like to try a business in Latvia but ready to leave again, if business fails
F	Liva	24-28	Study, but first was working	6	UK	Bachelor	Wants to continue Master studies in the UK
F	Loreta	24-28	Study	7	UK	Master	No, lack of opportunities for her foreign husband and low wages in Latvia. But very engaged in diaspora organisation in the UK
M	Klavs	24-28	Study, but first was working	5	UK	Master	Temporary, visiting friends and inquiring about possibilities to study PhD in Latvia
F	Paula	19-23	Study, but first was working	5	UK	Bachelor	Wants to return after some money earned abroad
M	Karlis	29-33	Work and study	6	UK	Bachelor	Wants to return, still owns a company in Latvia
F	Gunita	29-33	Study	4	US,	PhD	Do not intend to return permanently, lack of opportunities for her foreign husband and low wages in Latvia
M	Gati	24-28	Family	11	US,	PhD	No, but maintaining ties with Latvia

M	Janis	24-28	Study	11	US	PhD	Returned temporary, do not intended to return permanently
M	Didzis	24-28	Study, scholarship	8	US	PhD	No, but maintaining ties with Latvia
F	Laura	24-28	Work and study	6	US	Master	Returned, but intends to leave again due to partner's job
M	Niklavs	24-28	Family	19	US and Canada	Master	Regular visits, temporary return, wants to return and open a private business

751

752

753

¹ In Latvian, female names end in 'a' or 'e'; male names in 's'.